

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7605

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 2071

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, JO, US

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN FORCE PLANNING AND US ASSISTANCE

REF: AMMAN 2070

SUMMARY: IN CONNECTION WITH MY DISCUSSION (REFTTEL) OF HAWK DEAL WITH KING, HE RAISED WITH ME, AS HE HAD WITH YOU AND THE PRESIDENT, THE WHOLE QUESTION OF FUTURE MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND PLANNING FOR JORDAN ARMED FORCES. HE SAID THAT HE REGRETTEED WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN THE HAWK DEAL AND STILL HOPED IT COULD BE SALVAGED. KING WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH US IN DEPTH WHERE HE IS GOING FOR THE NEXT 3 TO 5 YEARS IN THE MILITARY AREA AND SEEKS SOME UNDERSTANDING OF LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE AND WHERE THIS WILL TAKE HIM. HE IS NOT AVERSE BRINGING SAUDIS IN AND OTHERS TO HELP AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE. HE REFERRED TO TALKS IN WASHINGTON AND HIS IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO CARRY THIS ON. OBVIOUSLY HAWK DEAL WILL AFFECT ANY SUCH COOPERATION. ASSUMING HAWK WORKS OUT, OPPORTUNITY FOR IN-DEPTH DISCUSSIONS WOULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT OCCASION FOR US TO CARRY THROUGH WITH EARLIER PROPOSALS FOR MORE CAREFUL PLANNING BY JORDAN OF ITS MILITARY ACQUISITIONS, INCLUDING ITS CAPACITY TO ABSORB NEW WEAPONS IN LIGHT OF THE TRAINING REQUIRED TO USE

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SUCH WEAPONS. SUCH PLANNING WOULD ALSO HELP TO PUT A DAMPER ON

AND PERHAPS EVEN END KING'S WILL-O-THE-WISP PERSONAL APPROACH TO WEAPONS ACQUISITION AND PLANNING. ON THE OTHER HAND, AS YOU APPRECIATED IN OUR WASHINGTON TALKS, IT WOULD INVOLVE GENERAL UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THE DEGREE OF OUR COMMITMENT IN TERMS OF MILITARY AID AND BUDGET SUPPORT FOR THE FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. AS I DEVELOPED FOR KING SOME OF THE POINTS IN REFTEL ON THE PRESENT AIR DEFENSE PROBLEM AND SAUDI FINANCING, HE TOLD ME THAT HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT AIR DEFENSE, BUT EVEN MORE CONCERNED ABOUT HIS LONGER RANGE CAPACITY TO DEFEND HIMSELF IN ALL AREAS. HE NOTED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH ME EARLIER AND ALSO WHEN HE WAS IN WASHINGTON HIS PLANS TO BUILD AN ADEQUATE AIR FORCE OF ABOUT 8 MODERN SQUADRONS (176 AIRCRAFT). HE ALSO TOLD ME HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE LOOMING COST PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED ARMORED VEHICLE REBUILD FACILITY AND THE FACT THAT MUCH OF JORDAN'S ARMORED FORCE WOULD BE OUT OF DATE IN THE FAIRLY NEAR FUTURE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS AN EVEN MORE OVERWHELMING PROBLEM FOR HIM THAN AIR DEFENSE. HE WANTED VERY MUCH TO TALK WITH US TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO HELP HIM WITH THESE PROBLEMS. HE REPEATED AGAIN FOR ME, AS HE HAD IN THE PAST, HIS DESIRE THAT THESE TALKS FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS AND WHAT THE US COULD DO TO HELP HIM WITH HIS NEEDS IN THIS AREA. HE THEN RECALLED HIS HAVING RAISED THIS ISSUE IN THE MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT AT THE WHITE HOUSE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT HE THOUGHT WE HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR HAVING WORKED OUT SIMILAR ARRANGEMENTS IN SPAIN AND TURKEY IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR BASES DEAL. I CONFIRMED TO HIM THAT THAT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE MEETING AND TOLD HIM I WOULD REPORT HIS CONCERN AND HIS APPROACH TO YOU RIGHT AWAY.

2. THE KING IS OBVIOUSLY AGAIN PREOCCUPIED WITH WEAPONS QUESTIONS AND ISSUES. WHILE HE TALKED IN TERMS OF THE FACT THAT EVEN IF HE WENT TO THE

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SIVIETS, HE WOULD HOPE TO CONTINUE A RELATIONSHIP WITH US, ALL OF OUR PAST CONVERSATIONS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO HIM AS DID YOUR RECENT MESSAGE, THAT THERE MIGHT WELL BE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP. THEREFORE IT WOULD SEEM TO ME BEST TO HOLD OFF FOR A LITTLE WHILE IN RESPONDING TO THE KING'S INTEREST IN AND REQUEST FOR CONSULTATIONS LEADING TO SOME AGREEMENT ON HIS LONG-TERM MILITARY

NEEDS AND OUR ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP. IN TIME,
SHOULD PRESENT UNCERTAINTIES CONTINUE TO DRAG ON, WE
MAY NEED AN INTERIM RESPONSE WHICH I SUGGEST THEN BE
PHRASED IN AS POSITIVE TERMS AS POSSIBLE BUT WITHOUT
A FIRM COMMITMENT ON ACTUALLY BEGINNING PROMPTLY TO
WORK ON SUCH A PROPOSAL -- (AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER WE SEE HOW
THE HAWK DEAL EVOLVES AND ITS EVENTUAL EFFECT ON OUR
RELATIONSHIP.)

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

3. IT WOULD REQUIRE THE JORDANIANS TO THINK IN
A SYSTEMATIC MANNER ABOUT THEIR FUTURE NEEDS;

B. IT SHOULD LOGICALLY DEVELOP A PLAN WHICH WOULD REQUIRE
CAREFUL JORDANIAN CONSIDERATION OF THE FULL EFFECT ON
THEIR ARMED FORCES OF THE ACQUISITION OF VARIOUS WEAPONS
SYSTEMS INCLUDING TRAINING PROGRAMS, MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS,
MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES, SUPPLY AND SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS AND SO
FORTH;

C. IF THE PLAN WAS ACHIEVED WITH KING'S COOPERATION
AND WITH HIS BLESSING, WHICH I AM SURE WOULD HAPPEN, IT
WOULD BE A VERY USEFUL BRAKE ON HIS INTRODUCTION OF
PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR UNEXPECTED AND UNFORESEEN ITEMS -- REQUESTS
WHICH HAVE CONTINUED TO HARRASS HIS OWN PEOPLE AND RAISE
A CERTAIN LEVEL OF HAVOC WITH OUR REGULAR PROGRAMS;

D. SUCH A PLAN MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE A MORE USEFUL

BASIS FOR JORDANIAN SOLICITING CONTINUING AND PERHAPS
EVEN INCREASED SUPPORT FROM ITS ARAB FRIENDS AND
ALLIES, PARTICULARLY IF IT WERE KNOWN THAT THE
APPROACH HAD RECEIVED US CONCURRENCE AND COOPERATION;

E. AND FINALLY IT WOULD INTRODUCE WITH US HELP FOR THE FIRST
TIME A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SYSTEM IN THE JORDANIAN ARMED
FORCES, A GOAL WE LONG SOUGHT FOR ITS DEFINITE

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ADVANTAGES NOTED ABOVE AS WELL AS FOR THE ADDED
VALUE OF DEVELOPING SOME SYSTEM AND ORDER IN
JORDAN'S LONG RANGE THINKING ABOUT ITS MILITARY PROBLEMS.
IT WOULD ALSO CORRESPOND TO SIMILAR EFFORTS BEING MADE
CURRENTLY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE SOME DISADVANTAGES
AS WELL:

A. COOPERATION IN THE PROCESS WOULD BEGIN TO
RAISE PRESUMPTIONS ABOUT LEVELS OF US ASSISTANCE
REQUIRED AND DISAPPOINTMENTS WHEN SUCH LEVELS FALL
SHORT OF THE MARK. (HOWEVER THIS SEEMS TO BE IN
PART OFFSET BY OUR WILLINGNESS TO TRY SUCH ARRANGE-
MENTS WITH SPAIN AND TURKEY ALBEIT APPLIED IN THE CONTEXT
OF AN AGREEMENT ON BASES.)

B. IT MIGHT RAISE FOR US SERIOUS CONGRESSIONAL
CONSIDERATIONS (UNLESS SOME MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS
WERE INCORPORATED IN THE PROCESS AT SOME POINT).
THERE WOULD BE AIRLY DIFFICULT RESULTS IF THE US
FALLS SHORT OF FUNDING OR IF ASSOCIATED ARAB STATES
ALSO COULD NOT MEET TARGETS OR COMMITMENTS.

5. ON BALANCE I BELIEVE WE HAVE ALREADY GIVEN THE
JORDANIANS IN WASHINGTON ENOUGH OF AN INITIAL POSITIVE
REACTION TO MAKE IT HARD FOR US NOT TO CONTINUE THE
PROCESS, AT LEAST TO THE POINT OF SEEING EXACTLY WHAT
THE KING HAS IN MIND. HOWEVER WE SHOULD MAKE ANY
FURTHER STEPS UNTIL THERE IS SOME SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION
OF THE CURRENT HAWK AIR DEFENSE FUNDING CRISIS.
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